

# ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

*Thirty-four activities were created for Earth Trails: Mississippi River. You can print copies of Instructor and Student versions. The files are located on the CD-ROM or you may download them from <[www.ipvtv.org/mississippi](http://www.ipvtv.org/mississippi)>.*

| Activity                           | Description  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>               |  |
| River Reading Circle               | Students study river-related poetry while participating in a reading circle.   |
| Indian Story Bag                   | Students write a story, gather objects to use as visual aids, and present their story to the class.  |
| Hot Topics of the Mississippi      | Students identify a Mississippi River issue and write a well-developed critical essay.   |
| Front Page News                    | Students write articles typical of those that might appear on the front page of a newspaper after an earthquake.   |
| My River is Bigger than Your River | Students compare the Mississippi River to other large rivers around the world.   |
| A Wanderer's Point of View         | Students use point of view in a Mississippi River story.   |
| What's Your Ambition?              | Students read an excerpt from <i>Life on the Mississippi</i> by Mark Twain and, using six traits of writing, compose an essay on a personal life ambition. |
| <b>MATH</b>                        |  |
| Animal Tracks                      | Students find the area of different animal tracks typical of those found along the Mississippi River.  |
| Dredging The Mississippi           | Students calculate the appropriate channel depth for barges to safely navigate the upper Mississippi River.  |
| Batter Up                          | Students use a variety of strategies to figure out the cost of baseball tickets.   |
| Chart Your Course                  | Students use real world scenarios to chart and explain time and distance.  |
| Family Vacation                    | Students create a budget for a trip by houseboat down the Mississippi River.   |
| Handshakin'                        | Students determine the number of handshakes within a group of people.  |
| How Low Can You Go?                | Students use elevation and mileage data to graph elevation and figure out pitch, grade, and slope.   |
| Jambalaya's Restaurant             | Students use a menu and recipes to work on addition, subtraction, and percentages.   |
| Scattered About                    | Students analyze and explain data correlation within different scatter plots.  |
| Water Locked                       | Students use formulas to calculate the volume of water in a lock.  |
| Mapping River Stats                | Students answer questions about river statistics using and creating appropriate charts and graphs.   |
| <b>SCIENCE</b>                     |  |
| Creeping Sheets of Ice             | Students recreate glacial activity using blocks of ice and gravel and pose theories about how river channels are created by glacial activity.              |

| Activity                                 | Description   |
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| Knock on Wood                            | Students learn about coniferous and deciduous trees that grow throughout the Mississippi River valley. Students explore their own geographical area and create a representative tree field guide.   |
| Hide and Seek                            | Students collect, study, and categorize macro-invertebrates, and then link their specimens to the rest of the animal kingdom. (Requires a field trip.)  |
| From Lazy River to Deep Water            | Students calculate volume and create a model of a lock to study how one works.  |
| Fish Haunts                              | Students study fish found in both river and lake environments and learn how they differ from one another. Students make and play a fishing game in order to discuss fish habitats.  |
| Draining the Land                        | Students identify the different parts of a river. Then students use a topographic map to determine gradient and predict new channel formation.  |
| Water Power                              | Students create a turbine and experiment with water current.  |
| Flyways                                  | Students observe animal migration patterns.   |
| <b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>                    |   |
| Bon Voyage Brochure                      | Students research recreation on the Mississippi River and design a travel brochure that highlights their attraction.  |
| Which Way is North?                      | Students explore the workings and practical uses of a compass. Using some of the basic skills of orienteering, including bearing, direction and pacing, students create and participate in a scavenger hunt.                                    |
| Trading Information                      | Students gather information on a state bordering the Mississippi River. Then using the <i>Five Themes of Geography</i> , they create a jumbo trading card with a picture representation on one side and relevant information on the other side. |
| Stamp It                                 | Students combine the written and visual arts to create a commemorative stamp collection centered upon a Mississippi River theme.  |
| Special Report: Flood of the Great River | Students organize their own newscast centered around a flood and report the breaking news from a variety of angles.   |
| History Talks                            | Students research a historical figure and event related to the Mississippi River. Then in a talk show format, they present their characters in a short speech followed up by questions from the "audience."                                     |
| OSAE Can You See                         | Students use OSAE (observe, speculate, analyze, and evaluate) to learn and draw conclusions about Mississippi River locations.  |
| Cause and Effect                         | Students learn about a historical event through studying its causes and effects. After researching the subject, writing several paragraphs, and creating a T-chart, students report their findings to the class.                                |